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3 Willard Street
Simsbury, CT 06070
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U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my concern over the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption and its possible adverse effects on small adoption agencies. I am the mother of a daughter who was adopted from Guatemala in 2002. I must confess that I do not know or understand all of the details specified in the Hague Convention. I do know, however, that many small and reputable agencies believe that if implemented, the convention could mean the closing of their doors. My husband and I worked with one such agency, Thursday's Child, Inc. in Bloomfield, CT.

The reasons that we chose to work with Thursday's Child were plentiful. However the main reason was the very fact that it was a small agency. We did not want to work with an agency that regarded us as a number. We wanted especially to work with an agency that was responsive to our needs and, more particularly, an agency with a staff that had personal experience with adoption. Thursday's Child met all of our needs and then some.

It is my understanding that many of the regulations within the Hague Convention will significantly increase the operating expenses of all agencies. Large agencies will obviously be better able to absorb these costs. Small agencies might be put out of business because of them. Regardless, even though the Hague Convention is supposed to make international adoption more affordable, it seems that agencies would have no choice but to pass their increased operating costs onto adoptive parents.

As an adoptive parent who experienced her share of trials and tribulations during an international adoption, I am in favor of regulations that would take some of the uncertainty out of the process. However, it seems that the United States should be working to improve the process for everyone. If the Hague Convention causes small, personal agencies to cease operation, I do not see how this can be good for anyone in the adoption community.

Sincerely,



Irene A. Banks